

**LOUISVILLE METRO CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION  
MEETING SUMMARY**

**Thursday, October 16, 2008**

**Members Present:** Judge Judith Bartholomew, Chair; Richard Badaracco; Joe Miller (Designee for Gary Barnes); Walter "Critt" Cunningham (Designee for Mike O'Connell); Charles Duncan; Elisa Freeman-Carr; Dan Goyette; Roger Henderson; David Huber; Representative Joni Jenkins; Bishop Walter Jones, Jr.; Carla Kreitman; Richard Lewis; David Nicholson; Judge James Shake; George Huffman (Designee for Paul Vido); Maj. Jim Sohan (Designee for Chief White); and Clarence Williams.

**Excused Members:** Judge Sheila Collins and William DeNardi.

**Guests Present:** Glenda Bradshaw (Jefferson County Attorney's Office); Jermaine Dobbins (Metro Youth Detention Services); Ann Schiavone Dyke (Jefferson County Attorney's Office); Donna Payne Farmer (Jefferson County Attorney's Office); Ryan B. Jarrell (Louisville Fire Department); Carla Kirby (Metro Youth Detention Services); Shelly Knopf (Circuit Court Administrator); Richard O'Malley (Jefferson County Attorney's Office); Lt. Shara Parks (LMPD); Lee Pennell (Metro Youth Detention Services); Karl Price (Jefferson County Attorney's Office); Alicia Ricketts (Metro Youth Detention Services); and Maurice Risner (JCPS).

**Staff Present:** Kim Allen; Faith Augustine; Betsy Helm; Tracey Neathery; and Stephanie Stidham.

**I. WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER**

With Judge Bartholomew delayed in trial, Kim Allen called the meeting to order welcomed all in attendance, introduced guests, and called for introductions.

**II. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY OF SEPTEMBER 25, 2008 MEETING**

The summary of the September 25, 2008 meeting was unanimously approved as submitted.

**III. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Judge Bartholomew reported that there is only one meeting scheduled for the remainder of the year on November 20<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will include a presentation on the Justice Reinvestment Pilot Project, an offender reentry program in the

Newburg Community that is coordinated through the Office of the Criminal Justice Commission. Marlene Gordon, Executive Director, Coalition for the Homeless, will also return to discuss the release of the new report on the Cost of Homelessness in Metropolitan Louisville.

Judge Bartholomew will be meeting with Criminal Justice Commission staff to discuss plans for conducting another survey of board members and criminal justice agency representatives to identify priority areas for action along with emerging issues and to evaluate the responsiveness of the Criminal Justice Commission in addressing member or agency issues. Judge Bartholomew requested board members to share any ideas or items to be included in the survey with either Kim Allen or herself.

#### **IV. SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

##### **Overview of Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program (PSN)**

**Presenters:** Dave Huber, U.S. Attorney, Western District of Kentucky  
Karl Price, Jefferson County Attorney's Office  
Major Jim Sohan, Louisville Metro Police  
Alicia Ricketts, Metro Youth Detention Services  
Jermaine Dobbins, Metro Youth Detention Services

U.S. Attorney Dave Huber opened the discussion by presenting the history of the PSN grant program. Initiated in 2001, PSN was a \$500,000 program aimed at reducing violent crimes by focusing gun related offenses. Over the years, the grant funds have diminished but not the success of the program. Mr. Huber added that this is not a typical top-down program. Since the focus is on collaboration with local law enforcement. With less than 50 federal agents in the Western District of Kentucky, the U.S. Attorney's Office must rely on local enforcement to identify cases for prosecution. Mr. Huber introduced Tom Dyke, Assistant U.S. Attorney and the PSN Program Coordinator. The office of the U.S. Attorney oversees PSN grant projects from Louisville to Paducah. Projects funded by the grant program include Project Backfire and the West Chestnut Characters program in Louisville Metro as well as other anti-gun and anti-gang activities in the remainder of the Western District of Kentucky.

Karl Price has been involved with prosecution of Project Backfire cases since the program's inception in 2001. Mr. Price reports that any mention of a gun or firearm in a citation will result in the case being referred to Project Backfire. The Project Backfire program allows for coordination between the offices of the U.S. Attorney, the Commonwealth's Attorney and the Jefferson County Attorney in order to obtain maximum sentences for these offenders.

Mr. Price advises that before the inception of Project Backfire a guilty plea for possession of a firearm would likely result in a \$25 fine plus court costs. But now, the result is more likely to be at least two days in jail or seven in the Home Incarceration Program. He added that the Project Backfire Conviction rate is 75-80%. According to Mr. Price, the message Project Backfire sends to the community is that we are serious about gun crimes regardless of the charge.

Major Jim Sohan of Louisville Metro Police reported on the department's use of PSN funding. During the summer of 2008, a PSN grant funded overtime for special anti-gun and anti-gang initiatives in targeted areas of Louisville Metro. Major Sohan reported that 300 overtime hours netted confiscation of 1 shotgun and 3 handguns. Through a partnership with Probation & Parole, LMPD also made home visits and returned eight confirmed gang members to the penitentiary for violation of parole. Major Sohan also noted that a partnership with ATF is tracing firearms held in the LMPD Property Room to identify if they are stolen.

Alicia Ricketts is Senior Social Worker for the West Chestnut Characters Program. This PSN-funded program is designed to reduce youth gang-related incidents and criminal behavior. Youth are referred to the program by the court. Ms. Ricketts states that although the intent is for Characters to have up to twelve participants, at present there are only three. According to Ms. Ricketts, the group sessions provide participants with an opportunity to address personal issues as well as to learn anger management or other life skills. The community service hours and service learning outings allow youth to learn and make positive contributions in the community. Jeremiah Dobbins, Social Worker, related some of Characters successes: members of opposing gangs becoming friends; an older youth becoming a mentor to younger ones.

## **V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Legislative Committee**

Stephanie Stidham reported that the committee has completed its review of legislative recommendations and has referred them to Representative Joni Jenkins for introduction to the legislature. Rep. Jenkins advises that the next step is drafting bills. The last session was very much about the budget, reports Rep. Jenkins. This year she anticipates great interest in dating violence. Rep. Jenkins also advised that since the upcoming session is limited to 30 days, the recommendations may have to be prioritized by the committee.

## **VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Kim Allen recalled that in the September meeting, Dr. Howard Bracco invited anyone interested to participate in the "843 Regional Council." Information regarding the group is included in the agenda packet for interested members.

## **VII. ADJOURN/NEXT MEETING**

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned. The next scheduled meeting is Thursday, November 20, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. in the Crown Room of the Judicial Center.